



Town of Natick

Water & Sewer Frequently Asked Questions



Who sets the rates?

A: The Board of Selectmen set the rates for water & sewer users in the Town of Natick. This is because in addition to being elected to the Board of Selectmen, they also serve as the Water & Sewer Commissioners.



When can rate payers raise or voice concerns to the Water & Sewer Commissioners?

A: Concerned ratepayers can send correspondence (via phone, e-mail or written letter) to the Board of Selectmen at anytime. They can also appear at any Selectmen's meeting and be heard under Citizen's Concerns.

How to get a hold of your water & sewer commissioners:

Phone: (508) 647-6410

E-mail: selectmen@natickma.org

Letter: Natick Water & Sewer Commissioners, 13 East Central Street, Natick, MA 01760

Meetings: 7:00pm, usually every other Monday Night. Check here for more information:

http://natickma.gov/Public_Documents/NatickMA_Calendar/



Who can I call if I have a question with my bill?

A: Contact the Treasurer/Collector's Office at (508) 647-6425 for assistance with a billing issue.



Who can I call if I have a problem with my water or sewer service?

A: Contact the Water/Sewer Division at (508) 647-6557 for assistance or questions concerning your water and/or sewer services.



What is the rate setting philosophy for the Town of Natick?

A: Water & Sewer Rates were established for FY 2010 with three primary goals: 1) Promote water conservation. 2) Raise sufficient revenues to cover costs. 3) Extend averaging to all master meter properties to promote fairness among residential consumers.



What goes into water rates?

A: Water Rates in Natick are set based upon the budgeted expenses required to run the water & sewer operations for a fiscal year. The FY 2010 Appropriated Budget for the Water & Sewer Enterprise Fund is \$13,560,366, or an increase of 3.57% over FY 2009. This funds all operations for the Water & Sewer system, Utility Billing operations, debt service, fringe benefits, a reserve fund and new capital projects.

Once the budget has been recommended by The Board of Selectmen, the Finance Committee and approved by Town Meeting, the necessary rates are generated by using a model which examines every user, their usage over a multiple-year timeline, changes in other sources of revenue (e.g. income earned off investments, connection fees for new developments, etc.) and collections. Finally, the Water & Sewer Commissioners may propose changes to the system which town staff will evaluate and provide analytical feedback for before a final series of rates are approved.



What are the major changes in FY 2010?

A: The rates approved for FY 2010 include two major changes in the rate structure for water & sewer users. They include:

- Implementation of a Fire Connection Fee for commercial and office properties who have sprinkler services.
- Averaging for all residential properties served by a master meter. All multi-family properties – condominiums, apartments, two-, three-, four-, six-, and eight-family homes and out-of-town customers served by master meters will receive averaging to treat these customers in the same way as single-family homes are treated.



How can I request an abatement?

A: Abatements to Water & Sewer Bills begin with the Treasurer. Once you have contracted the treasurer's Office, he can make a determination as to your individual situation and can decide whether to abate your bill or forward to the Water/Sewer Commissioners (Board of Selectmen) for further investigation. The Treasurer can only abate bills if there is a billing error, incorrect meter read, or if the property owner can demonstrate that excess usage does not go into the sewer system.

Once it has been reviewed by the Treasurer and if it is determined it needs to be forwarded to the BOS, the Board will schedule a date and hold an abatement hearing during a regularly scheduled meeting. Most regularly scheduled meetings of the Board of Selectmen begin at 7:00pm on Monday Night's. Please check the public meeting calendar at www.natickma.org for more information on meeting times and dates.